

COLWICH PARISH COUNCIL



PD120 ANTI-SEXUAL HARRASSMENT

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ANTI-SEXUAL HARRASSMENT

Anti-Sexual Harassment – PD120

Revision history

This document was originally written by:

Name	Position	Date
Michael Lennon	Chief Officer	October 2024

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Chairman of Council	W Plant

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Revision History

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1. POLICY STATEMENT

- 1.1 Colwich Parish Council (the Council) is committed to creating and maintaining a work environment free from sexual harassment.
- 1.2 The Council believes that all Councillors and officials have the right to attend meetings and to work in an environment that promotes equality, civility and respect. In aiming to achieve this ambition the Council signed the Society of Local Council Clerks/National Association of Local Councils (SLCC/NALC) Civility and Respect pledge in December 2022 (PD019).
- 1.3 This policy complies with the Equality Act 2010 and the Worker Protection (Amendment of Equality Act 2010) Act 2023, reflecting the Council's commitment to preventing sexual harassment in the workplace.
- 1.4 This policy supplements the Council's Code of Conduct (PD012); Protocol between Councillors and Officials (PD017); Civility & Respect (PD019); Bullying & Harassment Policy (PD123); Disciplinary Policy (PD124) and Grievance Policy (PD125).

2. SCOPE

- 2.1 This policy applies to all Councillors, cooptees, officials, contractors, consultants, temporary workers and anyone under a contractual or employment relationship with the Council.
- 2.2 This policy extends to all Council premises, work-related events, business trips and any situation where the individual is representing the Council.

3. DEFINITION OF SEXUAL HARASSMENT

- 3.1 Sexual harassment is defined as conduct of a sexual nature that has the purpose or effect of violating an individual's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment; and less favourable treatment related to sex or gender reassignment that occurs because of a rejection of, or submission to, sexual conduct.
- 3.2 This can include, but is not limited to:
 - 3.2.1 Unwelcome sexual advances or requests for sexual favours.
 - 3.2.2 Unwanted physical contact.
 - 3.2.3 Suggestive comments or gestures.
 - 3.2.4 Displaying sexually explicit materials in the workplace.
 - 3.2.5 Any other behaviour of a sexual nature that an individual finds offensive.

4. EXAMPLES OF SEXUAL HARASSMENT

- 4.1 Sexual harassment takes many forms. Whilst it is not an exhaustive list, examples include:
 - 4.1.1 Physical contact of a sexual nature, unwelcome physical contact or intimidation.

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- 4.1.2** Persistent suggestions to meet up socially after a person has made it clear they do not welcome such suggestions.
- 4.1.3** Showing or sending offensive or pornographic material by any means (e.g. text; video clip; email; or by posting on the internet or social media).
- 4.1.4** Unwelcome sexual advances, propositions, suggestive remarks or gender-related insults.
- 4.1.5** Offensive comments about appearance or dress, innuendo or lewd comments.
- 4.1.6** Leering, whistling, or making sexually suggestive gestures.
- 4.1.7** Gossip and speculation about someone's sexual orientation or transgender status, including spreading malicious rumours.

5. RESPONSIBILITY

- 5.1** All Councillors and officials are responsible for upholding this policy and should refrain from engaging in any form of sexual harassment.
- 5.2** Councillors
 - 5.2.1** Chairmen have a particular responsibility to monitor Full Council and Committee meetings and to take immediate action to address any form of harassment that comes to their attention.
- 5.3** Officials:
 - 5.3.1** The Chief Officer, Deputy Chief Officer and Head Lengthsman must, by their behaviour, set an example to all officials.
 - 5.3.2** The Chief Officer, Deputy Chief Officer and Head Lengthsman must monitor the work environment and take immediate action to address any form of harassment that comes to their attention.
 - 5.3.3** The Chief Officer, under the Council's Scheme of Delegation (PD126) para 5.6, has the control of discipline for officials including the power of suspension and dismissal.

6. REPORTING MECHANISM

- 6.1** The Council encourages, and will support, any official who feels they have been subjected to sexual harassment to report the incident as soon as possible.
- 6.2** Reports can be made to the Deputy Chief Officer or Head lengthsman, the Chief Officer, the Chairman of the Council or the Chairman of the Employment Committee.
- 6.3** Councillors are encouraged, and will be supported, to raise concerns with the Chairman of the Council and/or the Monitoring Officer.

7 INVESTIGATION PROCEDURE

- 7.1** The Council, upon receiving an allegation of sexual harassment, will appoint an official to undertake an investigation and report to a sub-Committee of the Employment Committee, for a allegation against an official, or the Complaints

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Committee, for an allegation against a member in line with policies PD041; PD123 and PD124.

7.2 The individual accused of harassment will have an opportunity to respond to the allegation.

7.3 Both the person making the accusation, and the individual accused will have the right to be accompanied at the hearing, as per PD041, PD123 and PD124.

8 DISCIPLINARY ACTION

8.1 If sexual harassment is confirmed, the Council will take the appropriate action.

8.2 Councillors

8.2.1 The matter will be referred to the Monitoring Officer at Stafford Borough Council.

8.3 Officials

8.3.1 Disciplinary action will be taken up to and including dismissal as per PD124.

9 PROTECTION AGAINST RETALIATION

9.1 The Council prohibits retaliation against anyone who reports sexual harassment or participates in the investigation process.

9.2 Retaliation is subjecting a person to a detriment because they have, in good faith, complained (whether formally or otherwise) that someone has been sexually harassing them or someone else, or supported someone to make a complaint or given evidence in relation to a complaint.

9.3 Any form of retaliation will be reported to the Monitoring Officer, in the case of a Councillor, under the Code of Conduct (PD012). Any form of retaliation by an official will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal, as per PD124 Disciplinary Policy.

10 TRAINING AND AWARENESS

10.1 The Council will provide training on this policy and the broader issue of sexual and other harassment to ensure Councillors and officials are aware of their rights and responsibilities.

10.2 Training will also cover the steps the Council is taking to prevent harassment and the importance of a respectful workplace and meeting culture.

SIGNED	<i>W Plant</i>
COUNCILLOR WENDY PLANT, PARISH COUNCIL CHAIRMAN	

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I CONFIRM THAT I HAVE RECEIVED AND READ A COPY OF THE COUNCIL'S ANTI SEXUAL HARASSMENT POLICY AND BY SIGNING THIS FORM ACCEPT THE TERMS THEREIN.

COUNCILLORS:	
Cllr Bloor	
Cllr Dunn	
Cllr B Forster	
Cllr M Forster	
Cllr Grocott	
Cllr Hall	
Cllr Hardwick	
Cllr Hill	
Cllr Lowbridge	
Cllr Martin	
Cllr Meakin	
Cllr Mosley	
Cllr Plant	
Cllr Walters	
OFFICIALS:	
Revd Mr Michael Lennon (Chief Officer)	
Mr Anthony Egan (Deputy Chief Officer)	
Mr Philip Russell (Head Groundsman)	
Mr Ian Deans	
Ms Francesca Alineri-Willis	
Mr Dan Lowbridge	
Ms Nicki Martin	